

For an American public impatient with the snail's pace of Congress, the last few weeks' slow advance of federal spending cuts has been especially grueling. An obstinate Senate and an effectively absent president have bottlenecked House Republican efforts to quickly restrain excessive federal spending. But that doesn't mean steady progress isn't being made.

Over the last three weeks, conservatives have successfully chopped \$10 billion from current year spending, and we don't intend to retreat. As you recall, on February 19, the House passed a spending plan that would cut \$61 billion this year, effectively lowering 2011 spending by \$100 billion below the president's budget request. Unfortunately, the Democrat-controlled Senate chose not to consider our spending cuts, forcing us to take a different path toward the same goal.

Last Tuesday, the House passed a short-term spending bill, funding the federal government through April 8 while cutting \$6 billion. This follows a previous two-week stopgap funding measure passed on March 1 that cuts spending by \$4 billion. Conservatives have agreed to keep the government operating for about a month, cutting spending as we go, to allow enough time for the House, Senate and the White House to reach a final spending agreement for this year.

We remain committed to our pledge to reduce this year's overall spending by \$100 billion, taking us back to the 2008 level before the administration began its deficit spending binge.

The Senate and the president should not read our willingness to briefly extend the deadline for an agreement as a lack of resolve, however. House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Virginia, are opposed to future extensions. If the president and his supporters in Congress refuse to come to the table to reach an agreement to end government's overspending, they will be held accountable for what may result.

And, this is just the beginning. Some \$14 trillion in federal red ink is not going to be erased in one year. It will require years of serious spending reductions, reforms to mandatory programs, and strong economic growth to bring down our massive debt. It's going to take a new mindset that government can no longer spend money we don't have. Approximately 40 cents of every dollar Washington spends is borrowed.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of programs that have relied on tax dollars to survive will have to make do without Uncle Sam's support. One such example is the House's votes on February 19 and March 17 to eliminate funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and National Public Radio (NPR). Admittedly, many Americans enjoy the quality news and educational programming carried by both the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and NPR. However, in an age when television and radio programming has gained greatly in both variety and quality, the PBS and NPR brands are strong and capable of flourishing without government subsidies.

These cuts are but the start of the enormous task that lies ahead for our nation. Just as families across the country are making the hard choices of cutting their budgets so they can pay utility and food bills, government must adopt the same approach. Lowering our debt will strengthen our economy and generate badly-needed job growth.

ObamaCare Anniversary:

This week marks one year since President Obama signed The Affordable Care Act into law. Written behind closed doors and rammed through Congress over the opposition of a majority of Americans, ObamaCare remains widely unpopular.

Many believe, as do I, that our country's health care system needs reform. However, the new health care law will not improve the quality or the timely delivery of health care in America. It will, however, massively grow the reach of government while restricting personal choices better made by patients and their doctors.

While the president seeks to force millions into plans they do not want, and penalizes many who choose not to sign up, Republicans favor targeted reforms that use our free market to reduce costs and deliver care to more Americans.

I voted against the president's health care bill when it passed the Democrat-controlled Congress in late 2009, and I voted, again, on January 19, 2011 to repeal it outright. I also voted on February 19 to defund major portions of ObamaCare.

ObamaCare disrupts and undermines the American health care system; it also adds nearly a \$1 trillion to the federal deficit over the next decade.

I join my conservative colleagues in the House in opposing the implementation of ObamaCare, and pursuing a federal budget agreement that eliminates all funding for it.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.